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Wonder;

OR,

A COMICAL DIALOGUE

WHICH

Lately happened in this Neighbourhood, between an Old Woman of Threescore and Ten, and a Youth about Twenty, with whom she lately married.

Woman. COME young man, your youth, wit and learning, with your other fine accompliſhments have ſo enſnared my heart, that I muſt own I could even now change my condition, and if you are willing, enter into wedlock.

Youth. Methinks the grave ought to be more in your thoughts than a huſband at this time of the day.

W. Though there is a little odds in our years, yet as I have money, and that conſiderable, will make amends for all other deficiencies.

Y. All the money in the world, without content, will never make us happy. Youth and age, winter and ſummer, can never agree; beſides children (the only pledge of mutual love) would be wanting.

W. Children are certain cares, uncertain comforts, how happy are they who are without them.

Y. Now you ſpeak like the fox in the fable, who ſaid, hang them they are ugly four grapes, when he could not reach them.

W. Many children bring their parents to ſhame, ruin and deſtruction, by their lives and actions.

Y. I grant it, yet thoſe that have grace are an honour, comfort and ſupport to their aged parents.

W. Conſidering the cares, fears and troubles, they are moſt happy who are without them.

Y. Ah! but our Saviour curſed the barren fig-tree, the fruitful vine is often commended, it is a comfortable expectation, and a pleaſing ſight, to ſee and find our children glorified ſaints in heaven, after this life.

W. Well, leaving theſe things to the clergy, as old as I am, I've a young tooth in my head.

Y. I find you have; but fine children would be wanting: what could incline you to think of wedlock at this time of the day? one would think, as I ſaid before, that your grave and winding-ſheet ſhould be more in your thoughts than a huſband.

W. Death I own, ſhould be always in my thoughts, the young as well as the old are not ſure of their lives one moment: but love is an unaccountable thing, and I confeſs that I love you to diſtraction, though I can give no reaſon for it.

Y. I will venture to judge for you; perhaps like king David, you love me as he

did the young virgin, to warm and cherish your old blood.

W. I am neither so old nor so cold as you take me to be.

Y. That's true; women that look out for husbands are never old; I have a grandmother at home, will tell you she is but forty years old, though she was that forty years ago, because she is over head and years in love with a young lad of sixteen.

W. Then she's a doating old fool for her pains.

Y. Now you speak like a woman; they seldom give one another a good word: but she is a looking glass to see your folly in.

W. I have seen a young man and an old woman live comfortably together.

Y. Some have seen swallows in winter, showers of money, honey, and God knows what, but we are not to see miracles every day.

W. But my dear if you will consent to have me, I'll do more than any other woman would agree to, you shall have liberty to keep a handsome maid, that she may wait upon you.

Y. So you would have me run a risk, by keeping a handsome maid, would you?

W. No my dear, I have known those that have done so.

Y. That is bad logic; marriage is a ſacred ſolemn thing, which our Saviour honoured with his firſt miracle; if we violate it, a curſe will follow here or hereafter.

W. My dear, I am but a ſimple woman, I won't pretend to diſpute with you that's a ſcholar, but in plain terms, I think I am neither ſo old nor ſo ugly but you may fancy me, and if any thing is wanting it ſhall be made up in obedience.

Y. Promiſes and pye-cruſts, they ſay, are made to be broken; if you catch me in the marriage nooſe you'll ſing another tune: for as the poet ſays,

Woman's fickle as the moon,
I'll truſt the wind and waves as ſoon.

W. Perhaps my dear, you have an averſion to our ſex?

Y. God forbid, I love my mother, aunt, and ſiſters, and ſo I will my wife, if I can find an honeſt one.

W. Well, thus I ſolemnly promiſe you, if you will marry me, I'll prove a tender, loving, chaſte, honeſt, and virtuous wife to you.

Y. Honeſt and chaſte you may be, for if I was a cuckold the devil muſt be the whoremaſter.

W. Why my dear do you think ſo? you

know the old saying, there's never so bad a jack but there's as bad a jill; pray what do you dislike in me.

Y. To be plain, you are old, tall and clumsy, I love all little things but penny loves, of all evils the least is to be chosen

W. By your words one would believe you was a woman hater.

Y. The Lord forbid, but I am of Cato's, a wise man of Rome's opinion. they are necessary evils we can't do without them; but we should use them as we do our horses, keep them well, but keep them under.

W. For shame, my dear, don't compare a woman to a beast, comparisons are odious.

Y. Comparisons are not odious in this kingdom, our Saviour compared heaven to a grain of mustard seed.

W. Don't speak so very slightly of women, you know they are God's creation as well as the men.

Y. I own it, and so are toads, snakes, and the vilest creatures, as well as we.

W. Do you make no difference between women and cattle, beasts and creeping things

Y. The Lord forbid I did not; a virtuous woman is like an angel, the crown and glory of a man, the chief delight, comfort and happiness of his life.

W. Such an one I'll prove to you, if you'll have me.

Y. I have but your word for it, and marriage is of such consequence, I must look before I leap, a man will not buy a horse before he tries him.

W. Sure my dear you don't expect that like an apprentice before marriage, I should live with you upon trial.

Y. Sir Thomas Moore, Lord Chancellor of England, was of that opinion, that we should search, see, and feel a woman before-hand, ere we plunge into matrimony: did the law of God allow it, I would willingly do the same.

W. He was a good lawyer, but a bad divine, he lost his head on Tower Hill for politics.

Y. That was for denying the king's supremacy, for his reasons were good in this case, to take a wife without knowing her thoroughly, is a dangerous step.

W. Socrates and many other learned men, allow it is the hardest knowledge in the world, to know another's temper without experience and acquaintance.

Y. I grant it, for Solomon, a wise man, says, The heart of a wise man is deceitful: and above all this, in another place says, that not a man of a thousand, nor a woman of ten thousand, is honest, faithful, just, or words to that purpose.

W. This I confess, but if you'll marry me, I'll be as constant to you as the loadstone to the North Pole, the sun to the dial, the season to the year, the turtle to her mate, or any thing that bears the name of constancy.

Y. Will you not scold me when I do amiss?

W. No I will be blind to all your faults.

Y. Will you be jealous if I should love, toy, or play with another woman?

W. No, I'll shut my eyes and go about my business.

Y. Will you follow me to the alehouse when I am gaming and drinking days and nights together?

W. No, unless with a candle to light you home when it is dark.

Y. If I get a child by the bye, will you smother it, and not expose me to the public?

W. I'll nourish it and cherish it, as if it were my own, because it is yours.

Y. If I'm sick, idle, or lazy, will you strive to maintain me?

W. I'll work my fingers to the bone to serve you in sickness or health.

Y. You won't alter your tone when we are married?

W. If I do you may kill me, that is, leave me, which would be as murder, or worse, because you are my life and soul, and are more dear and valuable to me than any thing in this world.

Y. My dear I said all this to try you: and I'll take out a licence to-morrow, and we will be married as soon as you please.

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FINIS.